claims 3, 7-8, 11, and 16, drawn to a non-woven fabric wherein said first crystallizable polyester component is poly(ethylene terephthalate) and said second crystallizable polyester component is poly(propylene terephthalate)

claims 4 and 17, drawn to a non-woven fabric wherein said first crystallizable polyester component is poly(propylene terephthalate) and said second crystallizable polyester component is poly(butylene terephthalate)

Species 3

claims 5 and 18, drawn to a non-woven fabric wherein said first crystallizable polyester component is poly(ethylene terephthalate) and said second crystallizable polyester component is poly(butylene terephthalate)

Species Group 2

Species 1

Species 2

claims 6-8, 11, and 19-20, drawn to a non-woven fabric wherein the bicomponent fibers are staple fibers

Species 2

claim 9, drawn to a non-woven fabric wherein the bicomponent fibers are continuous

Applicants elect Group I, claims 1-11, drawn to a non-woven fabric, for prosecution without traverse. Within Group I, applicants elect Species 1 from Species Group 1, claims 3, 7-8, and 11. Applicants also elect Species 1 from Species Group 2, claims 6-8, and 11. Applicants maintain the right to file divisional applications directed to the non-elected claims.

A listing of all claims is provided on page 4.

This response is intended to be a complete reply. Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned by telephone.

2.9 Date: June 28, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

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Tel.: (302) 683-3316 Fax: (302) 683-3473 This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

- 1. (original) A non-woven fabric comprising a plurality of entangled helically crimped asymmetric bicomponent fibers comprising a first crystallizable polyester component and a second crystallizable polyester component, said first crystallizable polyester component exhibiting a lower rate of crystallization than said second crystallizable polyester component, said fibers being characterized by a denier range of 0.5 to 6 denier, said fibers exhibiting at least 50 crimps per inch with a crimp radius of curvature of 0.2 mm or less, and wherein said fibers are preponderantly entangled with one another, and wherein further said fibers are preponderantly oriented in a well-defined plane said non-woven fabric being characterized by a bulk density of 0.2-0.4 g/cm³.
- 2. (original) The non-woven fabric of Claim 1 wherein the bicomponent fibers are side-by-side bicomponent fibers.
- 3. (original) The non-woven fabric of Claim 1 wherein said first crystallizable polyester component is poly(ethylene terephthalate) and said second crystallizable polyester component is poly (propylene terephthalate).
- 4. (withdrawn) The non-woven fabric of Claim 1 wherein said first crystallizable polyester component is poly(propylene terephthalate) and said second crystallizable polyester component is poly (butylene terephthalate).
- 5. (withdrawn) The non-woven fabric of Claim 1 wherein said first crystallizable polyester component is poly(ethylene terephthalate) and said second crystallizable polyester component is poly (butylene terephthalate).
- 6. (original) The non-woven fabric of Claim 1 wherein said bicomponent fibers are predominantly staple fibers.
- 7. (original) The non-woven fabric of Claim 6 wherein said first crystallizable polyester is poly (ethylene terephthalate) and said second crystallizable polyester is poly (propylene terephthalate) at a concentration ratio in the range of 70:30 to 30:70 respectively.

- 8. (original) The non-woven fabric of Claim 7 wherein the concentration ratio is in the range of 60:40 to 40:60 respectively.
- 9. (withdrawn) The non-woven fabric of Claim 1 wherein said bicomponent fibers are continuous.
- 10. (original) The non-woven fabric of Claim 1 further characterized by an initial Young's modulus of 1.2 to 12 MPa and ultimate stretch of up to 150%.
- 11. (original) A non-woven fabric comprising a plurality of entangled helically crimped side-by side staple bicomponent fibers in the range of 0.5 to 6 denier and an uncrimped length in the range of 20 to 25 millimeters comprising polyethylene terephthalate and polypropylene terephthalate at a concentration ratio in the range 60:40 to 40:60, said fibers exhibiting at least 50 crimps per inch with a crimp radius of curvature of 0.2 mm or less, and wherein said fibers are preponderantly entangled with one another, and wherein further said fibers are preponderantly oriented in a well-defined plane said non-woven fabric being characterized by a bulk density of 0.2-0.4 g/cm³, an initial Young's modulus of 1.2 to 12 MPa, and ultimate stretch of up to 150%.
- 12. (withdrawn) A process for forming a non-woven fabric, the process comprising disposing a plurality of asymmetric bicomponent fibers having latent crimp in a planar array of overlapping fibers, said fibers being preponderantly oriented in the plane thereof, disposing said planar array between two constraining surfaces; heating said planar array to develop at least a portion of said latent crimp with the proviso that during at least a portion of said heating, said non-woven structure is in constraining contact with said constraining surfaces.
- 13. (withdrawn) The process of Claim 12 wherein said planar array is in the form of a fibrous mat preform.
- 14. (withdrawn) The process of Claim 12 wherein the bicomponent fibers are side-by-side bicomponent fibers.
- 15. (withdrawn) The process of Claim 12 wherein the bicomponent fibers consist essentially of polyesters.

- 16. (withdrawn) The process of Claim 12 wherein said first crystallizable polyester component is poly(ethylene terephthalate) and said second crystallizable polyester component is poly (propylene terephthalate).
- 17. (withdrawn) The process of Claim 12 wherein said first crystallizable polyester component is poly(propylene terephthalate) and said second crystallizable polyester component is poly (butylene terephthalate).
- 18. (withdrawn) The process of Claim 12 wherein said first crystallizable polyester component is poly(ethylene terephthalate) and said second crystallizable polyester component is poly (butylene terephthalate).
- 19. (withdrawn) The process of Claim 12 further comprising the step of forming the fibrous mat preform from an aqueous slurry of floc having an average length of 3 to 25 millimeters.
- 20. (withdrawn) A process for forming a non-woven fabric, the process comprising forming a fibrous mat preform from an aqueous slurry of side by side uncrimped staple bicomponent fibers having a latent crimp contraction of at 70-80%, 20-25 millimeters in length, disposing said fibrous mat preform between two constraining surfaces; heating said planar array to develop at least a portion of said latent crimp with the proviso that during at least a portion of said heating, said fibrous mat preform is in constraining contact with said constraining surfaces; said bicomponent fibers comprising polyethylene terephthalate and polypropylene terephthalate in a respective concentration ratio in the range of 60:40 to 40:60.